

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 17 with the following redlined paragraph:

Figure 5 shows a face 144 of a valve plate 142, in plan view. The valve plate 142 includes kidney ports 118, 119 positioned to the right and left of top-dead-center and bottom-dead-center, in a known manner. Each of the kidney ports 118, 119 has a shape that describes a portion of a circle, and is positioned in the valve plate 142 such that the kidney ports define inner and outer circumferences 121a, 121b of an annular region 121 of the valve plate 142. The valve plate 142 also includes first and second pressure relief ports 148, 150 positioned at top-dead-center and bottom-dead-center, respectively, and substantially outside of the annular region 121 defined by the inner and outer circumferences 121a, 121b. In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 5, the pressure relief ports 148, 150 are positioned, radially, outside the outer circumference 121b. The first and second pressure relief ports 148, 150 are in fluid communication with each other via a pressure relief channel or bore 154, shown in hidden lines in Figure 5.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 23 with the following redlined paragraph:

In the position shown, the vent notch 138a is on the verge of coming into fluid communication with the pressure relief port 148. Directly opposite the cylinder port 134a, the cylinder port 134b is at the point in the rotation where it is just losing fluid communication with kidney port 118, and the vent notch 138b is on the verge of coming into fluid communication with pressure relief port 150. It will also be understood that at this point in rotation, the cylinder associated with cylinder port 134b is pressurized at the high fluid pressure associated with the high pressure fluid source coupled to the kidney port 118, and that as the cylinder port 134b approaches bottom-dead-center the associated piston 108 is at its point of maximum withdrawal from the corresponding cylinder 140. It can be seen, with reference to Figure 5, that the leading edges of cylinder ports 134a, 134b have, respectively, crossed the top- and bottom-dead-center points of rotation before the vent notches 138a, 138b approach the respective pressure relief ports 148, 150.